Attendance Policy

Working together to improve school attendance

Every Day Matters

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Reviewed by: Mr R Beattie
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The importance of attendance

1 Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and at President Kennedy school we recognise the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset.

2 We believe that if students are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

3 It is the role of the school, the parents/carers and the Local Authority to encourage full attendance and punctuality.

4 Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

5 It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our students.

6 If there are problems which affect a student's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents/carers and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times.

7 An effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities. All school leaders, school staff, students and parents/carers must understand these expectations. Whilst every student has a right to a full-time education a high attendance expectation will be set for the students and year groups e.g. Colleges. This policy will be applied fairly and consistently but considering the individual needs of students and their families who have specific barriers to attendance.

8 In development and implementation of this policy, the school considers their obligation under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN convention on the Right of the Child.

9 For the most vulnerable students, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and supported. Research has shown associations between regular attendance from school and a number of extra-familial harms. This includes crime 90% of young offenders had been persistently absent.

Legal framework

10 Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at school or by education otherwise than at school. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

11 The government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence. The school will follow the guidance set out by the Department of Education (DfE) under its current format of Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk) and the Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- and act early to address patterns of absence.

12 Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.

13 In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with parents and carers and the Local Authority to ensure that parents are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures.

14 A “Parent” is defined as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

Attendance is everyone's responsibility

At President Kennedy School, we believe that school attendance matters to everyone. School attendance is a shared responsibility by governors/trustees, all school staff, parents, pupils, and the wider school community. However, the names and contact details of the school leaders responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school are listed below:

Senior Leads	Mr R Beattie and Ms J Alexander
Attendance Officers	Mrs K Morse and Mrs R Bal

<u>Colleges</u>		
The Bridge (Year 7)	Ms H Tovey	(College Director)
	Mrs S Hanney	(Pastoral Leader)
The Gateway (Year 8)	Mrs S Starbuck	(College Director)
	Mrs E Keogh	(Pastoral Leader)
Year 9	Ms J Knas	(College Director)
	Miss K Basra	(Pastoral leader)
Year 10	Mr A Fogarty	(College Director)
	Mr T Arnett	(Pastoral Leader)
Year 11	Mr M Jhutti	(College Director)
	Mrs M Rataj	(Pastoral Leader)
Post 16	Ms E Mitchard	(College Director)
	Ms S Bartley	(Pastoral Leader)
<u>Inclusion</u>	Miss V Roberts	(College Director)
	Ms K Sandhar	(Pastoral Leader)

15 The Local Governing Committee/Trustee Board of President Kennedy School recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the

school's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Supporting the school to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Ensuring school staff receive training on school attendance.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it

Expectations of the school

16 To develop and maintain a culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance and acknowledges and rewards a successful record of attendance.

17 The school will encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance.

18 To ensure a consistent approach throughout the school.

19 To accurately complete admission and attendance registers.

20 Accurate registers will be taken in the morning Tutor period and all 5 lessons during the day.

21 To have robust daily processes (first day calling) to follow up absence.

22 To record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise its occurrence.

23 The school will work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued.

24 The school will send a clear message to all students that if they are absent, they will be missed.

25 The school will consult with all members of the school and the Children's and Family First team and will work together in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy.

26 The school will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on Registration Regulations and the Law relating to attendance.

27 The school will ensure that regular information will be sent to parents/carers and students informing them of attendance rates and related issues.

28 Use data to identify students at risk of poor attendance and to act upon this by working with each identified student and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.

29 The school will promote positive staff attitudes to students returning after absence.

30 The school will ensure regular evaluation of attendance policy and procedures by the school Leadership Team and the School Governors as part of the school improvement plan.

31 The school will ensure that consistent and vigorous attendance monitoring and evaluation procedures will be in place.

32 To have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.

33 To have a clear attendance policy on the school website which all staff, students and parents/carers understand.

Expectations of students

Attendance Matters		Equals days absent	Approx. weeks absent	Lessons missed	Risk of underachievement
100%	Excellent	0 days	0	0	Accessing all learning opportunities
98%	Very Good	2 days	0.4 weeks	10 lessons	
96%	Good	5 days	1 week	25 lessons	
95%	Average for the school	10 days	2 weeks	50 lessons	A few learning opportunities missed
93%	Room for improvement	15 days	3 weeks	75 lessons	**Risk of underachievement**
90%	Unsatisfactory Well below average	20 days	4 weeks	100 lessons	**High risk**
85%	Poor	30 days	6 weeks	150 lessons	**Severe risk**
80%	Real cause for concern	40 days	8 weeks	200 lessons	**Extreme risk**
If the attendance figure is 85% or below and you cannot prove a good reason for the absence the parent/carer risks being fined or taken to court					

34 Students are required to attend school for 190 days each year and parents/carers must ensure they attend. The national target for attendance is at least 97%. The impact of poor attendance on achievement is shown above.

35 Although for ease of understanding the % above are worked out from 200 days – any absence effects the student's ability to access all learning opportunities.

Expectation of parents/carers

All parents/carers

36 Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.

37 Ensures their child is punctual every day.

38 Ensures the school has at least two up to date contact numbers in case of emergency.

39 Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness) preferably on the first day of absence and if possible indicate the potential day of return.

40 Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and to do so in advance (preferably 20 school days).

41 Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.

42 Attend meetings about their child's attendance; support the school in responding to concerns regarding attendance

43 Section 444(1) of the EDUCATION ACT 1996 states that 'IF a child of compulsory school age who is registered student at a school fails to attend school regularly at the school the parent is guilty of an offence'.

44 Parents DO NOT have an automatic right to take their child out of the school for a holiday or any other period of extended leave during term time.

45 Only the school within the context of the law can authorise absence and this does not oblige the school to accept the reason for the absence.

46 All unexplained absences will be investigated and parents/carers will be kept informed about any attendance concerns.

50 The DfE school attendance policy emphasizes that parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child receives a full-time education and attends school regularly. Absences are typically only authorised for illness or, in exceptional, pre-approved circumstances. Holidays in term time are generally not allowed, and unauthorised absences can lead to fines or legal action. The DfE has published guidance, "Working together to improve school attendance", which details the responsibilities of parents, schools, and local authorities to promote good attendance.

Support for students with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

51 Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to learning.

Parents/Carers of students at risk of becoming persistently absent

52 Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.

53 Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.

Parents of persistently absent students

54 Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.

55 Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including a contract or voluntary early help to prevent the need for legal intervention.

56 Parents/carers who fail to fulfil their responsibility can expect legal action: this may include Penalty Notices/Fast Track to Prosecution/Parenting Orders.

Persistent absenteeism

57 A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance falls **below 90%** at any time during their school life. Absence at this level is detrimental to a child's education.

58 All students whose attendance has fallen to 85% or are at risk of moving towards the PA will be monitored rigorously through the school 'tracking procedure'.

59 Support and action towards all PA students are automatically reviewed on at least a weekly basis.

60 If the student and family fail to work with the school and external agencies to get the student to engage with the school and their learning then this could lead to prosecution.

Supporting and re-integrating students on long term absence

61 Pastoral Leaders alert Subject Leaders about long term absence and parental requests for work to be completed at home. Subject Leaders organise setting work, leaving it for collection and the marking of returned work.

62 Students who have been absent long term and who need to catch up on school work will spend a negotiated amount of time in the Student Support Centre doing work set by Subject Leaders and managed by the Pastoral Leader with the Head of Student Support. Some students returning after long term absence will be considered for an alternative curriculum involving fewer subjects and some study time in the support centre until they are able to integrate fully into the mainstream

curriculum. Students who are school phobic or who have undergone recent crisis will be supported by the Student Support Centre as appropriate.

Tailored support

63 At President Kennedy School we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

64 We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

65 To plan the correct support, we will always invite parents and pupils to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and devise a plan to support the child's regular attendance. Support offered will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. This may include a referral to Early Help or a Parenting Contract.

Persistent absence and the use of legal interventions

66 A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 40 sessions (20 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

67 The attendance of all pupils at our school are monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in the section above. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

68 If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/ punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice or prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

69 Parents found guilty in a Magistrates' Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3-month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

Fixed penalty notices

70 If your child has **10 or more sessions** (equal to 5 full school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school-week period, the local authority may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

For a first offence, the fine is **£80 per parent, per child** if paid within 21 days, rising to **£160** if paid within 28 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, the fine is a flat **£160** with no early payment discount.

A third offence within 3 years cannot receive a penalty notice and will instead be referred directly to the magistrates' court for prosecution.

Part-time timetables

71 All students of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a student's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a student from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

72 A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a student's behaviour. A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary.

73 Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the student is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision.

74 There should also be a formal agreement in place for regular reviewing it with the student and their parents. By agreeing to a part-time timetable, the school will agree to a student being absent from the school for part of the week or day and will therefore treat the absence as authorised.

Start of the school day

75 Poor punctuality is not acceptable: students who consistently arrive late for the school day disrupt learning and miss out on valuable teaching time.

76 Students should arrive at school by 8:40am.

77 By 8.45am students should be in their registration room or at their assembly gathering point.

78 Students who arrive after 8.45am must report to student reception: their time of arrival at school will be recorded by the member of staff on duty.

79 All students late without a valid reason will be expected to attend a 15-minute detention on the day. Repeat offenders will expect to receive longer detentions after the learning day finishes.

80 Students are expected to remain in the school all day and will not be allowed to leave the school site without permission.

81 Truancy from the school is taken very seriously and parents/carers will be informed at the earliest opportunity.

82 Students who truant from lessons will be expected to make up the time they have missed and usually on the same day.

Late arrival to school

Late per day during the school year	Equals day's worth of teaching lost in a year
5 minutes	3.4 days
10 minutes	6.9 days
15 minutes	10.3 days
20 minutes	13.8 days
30 minutes	20.7 days

83 When students arrive late at school they miss the tutor's instructions and the induction to the lesson.

84 Frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning lost, and can seriously disadvantage the student's education.

85 Fixed penalty noticed may also be issued for persistent lateness.

During the school day

86 Staff must know where children are at all times and therefore communication between staff is vital to ensure Colleges know where their students are

87 Students may only leave during the school day following clear communication between the parent/carer and the College.

88 Students leaving site must sign out at student reception.

End of the school day

89 The main school day ends at 3pm and students may only leave before then with permission from parents/carers and the school.

Information for parents/carers

How to inform the school of the reason for an unexpected absence?

90 The school should be notified before **8.30am** on the first day of absence so that we can make College Teams/Tutors aware by the start of registration at 8.40am.

91 Absence must be reported via the ClassCharts app. Should you need support with accessing ClassCharts, please contact our Admin team at Reception@pks.coventry.sch.uk. **The school is no longer able to accept absence notifications by telephone**.

92 Please provide the following information when reporting the absence on ClassCharts:

- The **reason** for the absence
- Likely **day of return**.

93 Parents/carers are encouraged to attach any relevant medical documents with the absence message on ClassCharts so the school can best support the child.

94 Please update the school daily if the illness or reason for absence is to be extended.

95 As part of our safeguarding activities, if the school has not received any notification of absence from the parent/carer for their child's absence, we will send a 'Keeping Kids Safe' message by 10.00am.

96 Pastoral teams may however, still contact you if they are in any way unsure about an absence. This is about protecting the children and ensuring they are not missing school unnecessarily.

Granting leave of absence

97 Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. The Headteacher will consider each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

98 Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

99 If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of the time the student can be away from school.

100 Parents/carers do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time and the Headteacher is no longer allowed to authorise holidays during term time.

101 Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance with a minimum of 10 school days (2 weeks) before the period of absence and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.

102 Parents/carers wishing to request a leave of absence for their child during term time must do so by completing the application for leave of absence form found on the school website. The completed form must be submitted to leaveofabsencerequest@pks.coventry.sch.uk. Submission of the form does not mean that this request has been authorised. Parents/carers should wait for a response before taking their child out of school.

103 Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in an absence during this time being classified as 'unauthorised'. This may result in legal action against the parent by means of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

104 If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Coventry City Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under Section 444 of Education Act 1996.

Medical and dental appointments

105 These should be made outside of school hours, but where this proves impossible, an appointment card or note from a parent/carer should be provided. Students are then required to produce the note or card signed/authorised by the College Team before they sign out at student reception.

Pupil absence for the purposes of religious observance

106 President Kennedy School recognises and acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority.

107 School will consider either authorising the student absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents/carers are requested to give advance notice to the school.

Roles and responsibilities within the school

The role of the Headteacher/Governors

- Ensure the attendance policy is implemented.
- Complete attendance figures for the Local Authority and the DfE.
- Ensures that the school has a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.
- Ensures that admission and attendance registers are completed accurately.
- Ensures robust daily processes are in place to follow up absence.
- Advise on and implement whole school strategies for improving attendance.
- Monitor attendance data, analyse data in order to identify patterns, set targets, support and inform policy and practice.
- Hold six weekly meetings with the Children's and Family First Worker (CFFW).
- Liaise with College Leadership teams.
- Co-ordinate attendance target groups.
- Monitor whole school attendance schemes and rewards.
- Present attendance figures to the School Leadership Team and Governors.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are fully trained in procedures that relate to attendance.
- Monitoring progress towards targets. Evaluation of the impact of the Attendance Policy and planned work identified in the School Improvement Plan.

Role of Attendance Officers

- To promote excellent attendance across the school by overseeing the work done by the Pastoral Leaders.
- To meet with the Assistant Headteacher for Attendance and CFFW to review intervention across the school.
- To support College teams by working with families and outside agencies to work towards improving targeted students' attendance.
- To oversee the Children's and Families cases early Help open within the school and to monitor their effectiveness.
- To carry out home visits when required.
- To liaise with the Designated Person for Child Protection as necessary.

College Directors

- Ensure early intervention is in place to support.
- Meet with College Leadership teams on a weekly basis to discuss attendance issues.
- Monitor College Attendance and support with strategies to improve poor attendance and celebrate good attendance.
- Liaise with Assistant Headteacher responsible for attendance.
- Monitoring progress towards targets. Evaluation of the impact of the Attendance Policy and planned work identified in the School Improvement Plan.

Pastoral Leaders

- Proactively use data to identify students at risk of poor attendance.
- Work with form tutors to identify and act if there is an individual attendance concern: all unexplained absences to be followed up.
- To ensure that all registers are up to date.
- Meet with parents if there are attendance concerns.
- Investigate causes of absence and plan strategies with tutors, parents, CFFW and outside agencies.
- To promote good school attendance by setting targets and award ‘good/improved attendance’ certificates as appropriate.
- To ensure that students who are absent for an extended period of time will have appropriate work sent home and re-integration back in to school upon their return.
- To ensure that ‘Early Help’ are opened as necessary to support children in attending school regularly and on time. Implementing the attendance Policy with the Children’s and Families Team.
- To carry out home visits where necessary.
- To liaise with the Designated Person for Child Protection as necessary.

Role of the Form Tutor

- As the first point of contact with students, tutors are crucial in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Tutor take registers using SIMS lesson monitor.
- Watch out for patterns in a student’s attendance/punctuality, investigate all absences.

- Display attendance data and attendance information on notice board in tutor room.
- Attendance figures discussed with tutor group on a weekly basis: 'College Group League table'.
- Ensure that students update their personal attendance (Student Planner) and work with individual students to set personal attendance targets (Weekly basis).
- All lateness to be monitored and discussed with individual students.
- Report to the Pastoral Leader all students whose attendance/punctuality is raising cause for concern.

Role of the Class Teacher

- To ensure the register is completed accurately at the start of each lesson
- To report to the College immediately any concerns around students who are absent.

SENCo, SEND/Inclusion Team

- The SEND (Special Educational Needs) Team and SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator will work with Colleges and parents/carers to support the child's needs to enable them to attend school.

Working with other agencies

108 Poor school attendance can be result of difficulties, faced by a child or family, and a cause of other problems such as exclusion: students with low levels of attendance tend to have other complex issues therefore a coordinated approach by a number of agencies can assist these students and their families. Regular referral meetings with outside agencies are held to support the co-ordination of service provision and to build on good practice.

Working with the police on truancy

109 The school will cooperate fully with the West Midlands Police. The named person for the Police to contact is the Deputy Headteacher. He will inform the Police of training days or other days when the school needs to close in term time. The school operates a student pass system to authorise students who need to be off site.

Role of the Children's and Families Early Help Service

- To meet regularly with the Assistant Headteacher for Attendance to examine the effectiveness of attendance interventions.
- To communicate regularly with the Pastoral Leaders to ensure Early Help and other intervention are in place.
- To support in home visits when required.
- To work with the school and families to create family support plans as necessary.
- To support the school in ensuring legal cases are taken forward as necessary.